

COVID-19 Update to School Closure

March 16, 2020

Dear Haldane Community:

Today, Governor Cuomo issued an order that will close New York schools for a minimum of two weeks, beginning Wednesday, March 18. Therefore, Haldane will now remain closed through Tuesday, March 31, 2020. I will continue to work closely with other superintendents in Putnam County, along with the County Executive's office, and will keep you up to date as the situation evolves.

I realize that an extended school closure is disruptive to many of our families, but in this case, it is in the best interest of public health. I ask for your continued flexibility and patience as New York State and Federal crisis management strategies expand. There is a lot of discussion about the potential impact to the school calendar and scheduled vacation days - those details will be sorted out in the coming days and/or weeks. For now, we remain focused on a few key objectives across several areas. In an effort to best coordinate our support and maintain our school operation, these priorities are listed on the district website under "COVID-19 Response and Resources." I encourage you to review this information as it will direct you to key individuals who are responsible for various elements of our crisis response.

Please find a few additional details below for your reference:

Learning from Home

By Wednesday, March 18 you or your child will have heard from the classroom teacher(s) regarding work to be completed at home. Please note that my direction to teachers was for this work to focus on reteaching, review, and/or enrichment. That is, no new instruction should occur through these remote learning activities. There may be exceptions in our college level high school courses.

School buildings will be closed to visitors after tomorrow. Please contact your child's principal if there are any additional materials that you may need from the school.

School Nutrition Program

Our food services staff have developed a plan for meal services to continue for families in need, beginning Tuesday, March 17. Our PTA will also assist with the development of care packages for these families. If you are in need of support and have not received direct communication from the school, please contact your child's building principal.

Field Trips/Extracurriculars

Please be reminded that during school closures, all athletics and extracurricular activities are cancelled. I have asked our building principals to proceed with either cancelling or postponing all field trips that are scheduled through April 30, 2020. The high school trips to Boston, MA and Washington, DC are cancelled. Further information will be provided in the coming weeks regarding all other trips.

Our school community has been tested before. Each time we have demonstrated resilience and commitment to the children and families of Philipstown. Although the current obstacles may be unique, our response will be no different. You can count on our school staff to be here for you and your family through this crisis.

Sincerely,
Phil Benante, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools